



Iowa Youth Congress Member Bios

Ames District



Addy Danielson (she/her/hers)

Addy lives in Ames and is a junior at Ames High School.



Kaydence Reyes (she/her/hers)

Kaydence is a freshman at Colo-Nesco High School, and lives in Colo. This is her first year in IYC. She is involved in student council, volleyball, basketball, soccer, softball, Des Moines Community College classes, and choir. She is passionate about all things literature. When you can't find her reading in her room, you'll find Kaydence at practice or watching a true crime documentary. Her future plans consist of going into the STEM field; particularly in either Neuroscience or Forensic science.



Reis Estey (she/her/hers)

Reis is a sophomore at North Polk High School in Elkhart. This is her first year in IYC. She is on her school's tennis team, and is a Senator in Student Council. Her favorite season is fall as she loves seeing the leaves change color. Reis enjoys volunteering, and getting to work with people and animals.



Iowa Youth Congress Member Bios



Andrew Kaprich (he/him/his)

Andrew is a junior at Ankeny High School in Ankeny. This is his first year as a IYC member. He is an active member of the National and Spanish Honor Societies, Ankeny Hawks Marching Band, the Show Choir Perpetual Motion, and many other activities in school and out of school. Outside of school, he is a team leader at the Ankeny Outside Scoop ice cream store. Andrew is passionate about helping others through his involvement in groups such as the Animal Rescue League and Teens Against Human Trafficking.



Anisha Choudahry (she/her/hers)

Anisha is a freshman at Prairieview Junior High School in Urbandale. This is her first year in IYC. She is involved in band, mock trial, and silver cord. She has received her black belt in Tae-Kwon-Do, loves playing her violin, and consistently exceeds expectations in the classroom environment. Anisha was also an All-State lawyer nominee in Mock Trial. She has participated in Mock Trial to improve her debate skills and wants to expand her knowledge of policies. She is interested in policy making and how they affect people's lives. Anisha would like to become a lawyer and study at an Ivy League school.



Lauren Smith (she/her/hers)

Lauren is a junior at Ames High School in Ames. This is her second year in IYC. In her free time, she loves to play and watch basketball, and has played for 10 years. She volunteers at voter registration drives at her school and is a member of her church. She is also involved in the Sunrise Movement, Students Advocating for Civil Rights Education, the co-leader of the Young Democrats club at her school and is the Co-District Officer of the Ames District in IYC.

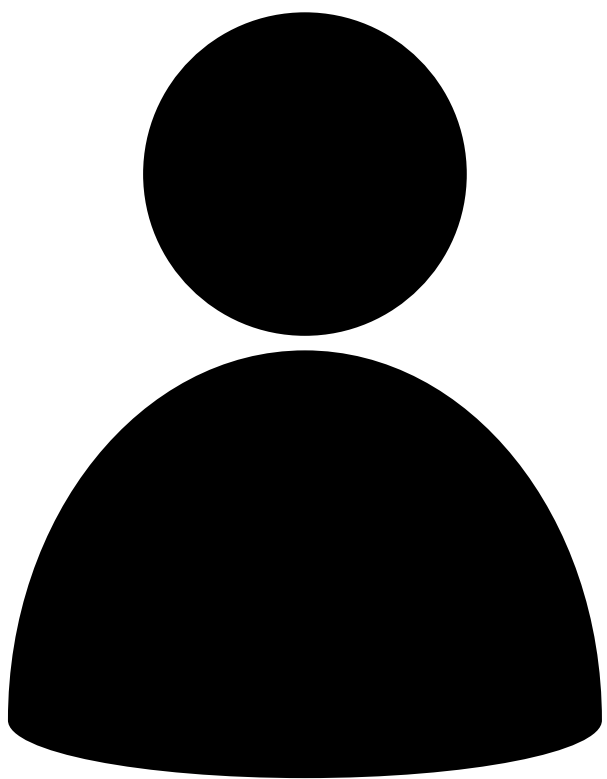


Iowa Youth Congress Member Bios

Emilia Broich (she/her/hers)



Emilia is a junior at Roland-Story High School and lives in Boone. This is her first year in IYC. She is involved in band, Future Farmers Association, Family, Career, Community leaders of America, Key Club, National Honor Society, Speech, basketball manager, track manager, softball manager, fall play crew, spring musical crew, mock trial, silver cord, student council, and is a faith formation instructor at her church. She loves being involved in activities around the community but when she needs to relax, she can be found binge-watching shows and movies with her mama while also knitting. Emilia plans on majoring in political science with a minor in psychology with an interest in pursuing law at an undecided university.



Addy Happ (she/her/hers)

Addy is a sophomore at North Polk High School in Polk City. This is her first year in IYC. Addy is heavily involved in extracurricular activities such as Student Council, Soccer, Gender Sexuality Alliance, Mock Trial, Speech, Choir, and is also a board member of her school's Environmental Protection Club. In her free time, Addy likes hiking, biking, reading, painting, and volunteering. After graduation, Addy hopes to pursue a career in government or law.



Iowa Youth Congress Member Bios

Bettendorf District



Ellie Bloodsworth (she/her/hers)

Ellie Bloodsworth is a senior at Davenport Central High School in Davenport. This is her first year in IYC. She is involved in National Honor Society, Mentor Violence Prevention, marching band, golf, environmental club, girls learn international and ENGIN. She enjoys reading, playing piano and hanging out with her friends. She is planning on majoring in Psychology.



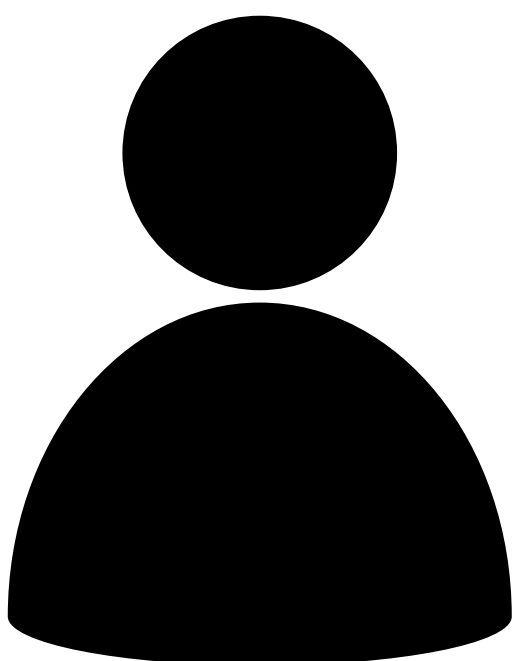
Veda Vegiraju (she/her/hers)

Veda is a sophomore at Pleasant Valley High School in Bettendorf. This is her first year in IYC. She is involved with choir (participant of honor choirs), cross country, and Spartan Assembly, a school leadership program. She is passionate about music and writes original songs. She plans to go to college majoring in engineering.



Tanya Rastogi (she/her/hers)

Tanya is a sophomore at Pleasant Valley High School in Bettendorf. This is her first year in IYC. Tanya is heavily involved in her school's band and choral programs, and is a flutist in the Quad City Youth Symphony Orchestra. Outside of school, she enjoys creative writing and art and holds publications in both categories. Tanya plans to attend a four-year university where she will likely study economics.



Mary Anna Le (she/her/hers)

Mary Anna is a sophomore at Davenport West High School in Davenport. This is her first year in IYC. She is the co-outreach leader on her robotics team and is involved in speech and debate, newspaper, orchestra, tennis, figure skating, and dance. Mary Anna plans on majoring in political science and English, then attending law school.



Iowa Youth Congress Member Bios

Carroll District



Madeline Parrott (she/her/hers)

Madeline is a senior at Carroll High School in Carroll. This is her first year in IYC. She is involved in band, chorus, speech, drama, student council, mock trial, debate, and History Day. She's also involved in the Policy Board for her school district, the administrative council for the First United Methodist Church, an actor at a regional pro theatre, and is the current American Legion Auxiliary Girl's State Governor. Madeline plans on double majoring in political science and environmental science on a 3+3 track at an undecided university.



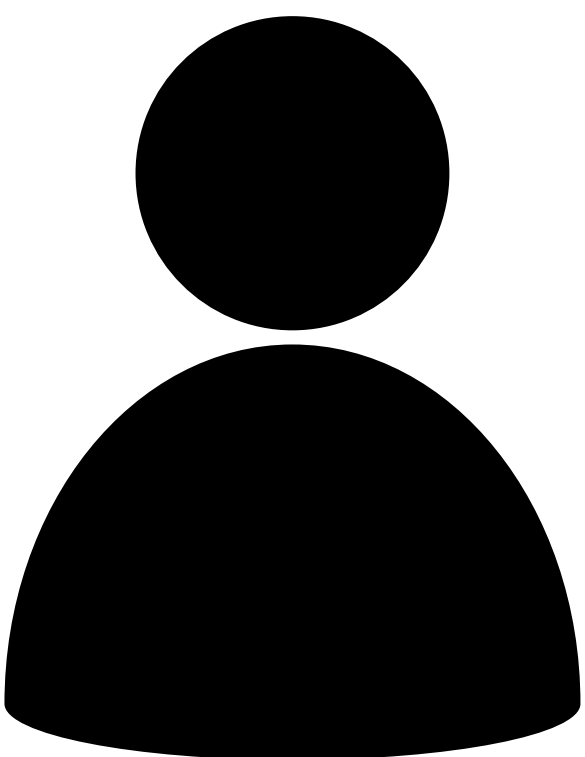
Sydney Bellinghausen (she/her/hers)

Sydney is a Junior at Carroll High School in Carroll. This is her first year at IYC. She is involved in History Day, Debate, Mock Trial, large and individual speech, Tennis, Science Bowl, the Student Board Review Council and Silver Cord. She is also active in her community, volunteering for the school, the community theater, the local museum and the local animal shelter. Sydney plans to major in law and government at an undecided university.



Maia Boell (she/her/hers)

Maia is a senior at Carroll High School in Carroll. This is her first year in IYC. Maia is involved in color guard, speech, debate, mock trial, tennis, drama, science bowl, and silver cord. Not only is Maia an active member within her school, she is also heavily active in her community. Maia plans on majoring in animal sciences with an interest in veterinary medicine and plans to attend an undecided university.



Giselle Galvan (she/her/hers)

Giselle is a senior at Denison Community High School in Carroll. This is her first year in IYC. She is involved in Iowa Future Business Leaders of America State Conferences and likes to be involved in the Denison community by participating in a soccer league. She uses empathy while being involved in the League of United Latin American Citizens within a diverse community. Giselle plans to attend college and is still open minded to options but fully knows her purpose is to study law.



Iowa Youth Congress Member Bios

Cedar Rapids District

Isabella Jimenez (she/her/hers)



Isabella is a junior at Kennedy High School in Cedar Rapids. This is her first year in IYC. She is involved in a Mental Health program at the University of Iowa, which will be determining the best curriculum for teachers and counselors that will improve the way they reach out to their students. She is involved in activities at her school such as soccer and cross country, plays the clarinet in band and is a section leader in this year's marching band. Isabella is a member of National Honor Society and she is also involved in Leadership for Five Seasons, a city leadership program. Academically, Isabella likes to challenge herself with advanced classes and AP courses, she is also in the honor roll at her school. Outside of school Isabella enjoys being with her family and friends as well as reading and watching movies. She plans on pursuing a career in medicine or economics and has a narrowed list of possible colleges she would like to attend.

Safal Bhattarai (he/him/his)



Safal is a junior at John F. Kennedy High School in Cedar Rapids. This is his first year in IYC. He is involved in many youth leadership organizations such as Leadership for Five Seasons and Cedar Rapids Police Explorers where he serves as a Post Lieutenant. Academically, Safal enjoys challenging himself and has appeared on the highest honor roll at his school. He enjoys volunteering and has worked with Meals from the Heartland and Honor Flight. Safal loves being outdoors and being with loved ones. He also loves playing golf and has played with many interesting and important people. Safal plans on majoring in business administration at Coe College and then pursuing a Juris Doctorate at the University of Iowa. He aspires to become a prominent official within the legal field.

Zachary Klopping (he/him/his)



Zachary is a sophomore at Vinton-Shellsburg High School in Vinton. This is his first year participating in IYC. In school, he plays soccer, runs cross country and participates in debate and student senate. He also volunteers for American Youth Soccer Organization, Very Important Person, helping kids with disabilities play soccer. He is interested in how economic data impacts legislation and plans to study economics and public policy in college.



Iowa Youth Congress Member Bios

Devasena Manikandan (she/her/hers)



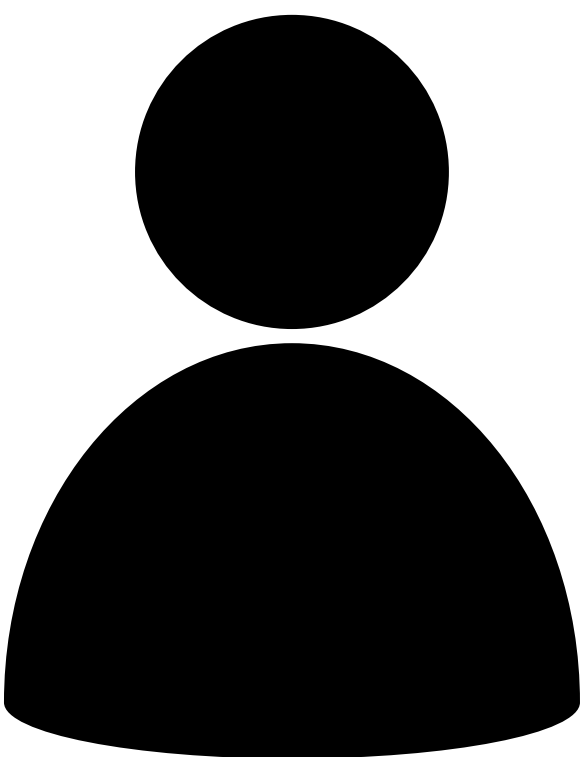
Devasena is a junior at Linn-Mar High School in Cedar Rapids. This is her first year in IYC. At school, she advocates for her peers in school by being an active member of Student Advisory, Social Justice, and Student Council. Additionally, Devasena is the Vice President and Co-Captain of her school's Future Business Leaders of America and Science Olympiad. Outside of school, she helps and advocates for her community by participating in the Marion Youth Council, volunteering weekly at UnityPoint St. Luke's Hospital, and volunteering as a math tutor in Math Matters. In the future, Devasena hopes to study law, business, or economics.

Dragon Zheng (he/him/his)



Dragon currently attends Linn-Mar High School in Marion as a junior in Cedar Rapids. This is his first year in IYC. Outside of IYC, he is very active serving on multiple clubs and organizations in school including Student Council, as a Public Relations officer, multicultural student leadership club, ALO, Social Justice Club, Student Advisory, his district's Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee, and the City of Marion Mayor's Youth Council. When he isn't tied up in extracurriculars, you can find him enjoying local small businesses, volunteering, and spending time with friends and family. He strongly believes in civic engagement and has pushed many hesitant voters to vote, most of whom have never voted before. He wants to pursue business management in college and is ready to advocate for youth and enact positive awareness/change.

Thanvee (Tori) Paga (she/her/hers)



Thanvee is a sophomore at John F. Kennedy High School in Cedar Rapids. An active member at her school, she's competed in speech at state-level in Improv and One Act. She's also a member of the Academic Decathlon team where she placed second at State in the Science category. Thanvee has also participated in her school's theater department appearing in Almost Maine and the Play Time Poppy Show Rudolph. She is on the Varsity Cheer Team and cheers for basketball and football. Thanvee was also recently elected Class of 2025's class president at John F. Kennedy High School.



Iowa Youth Congress Member Bios

Olivia Midcalf (she/her/hers)



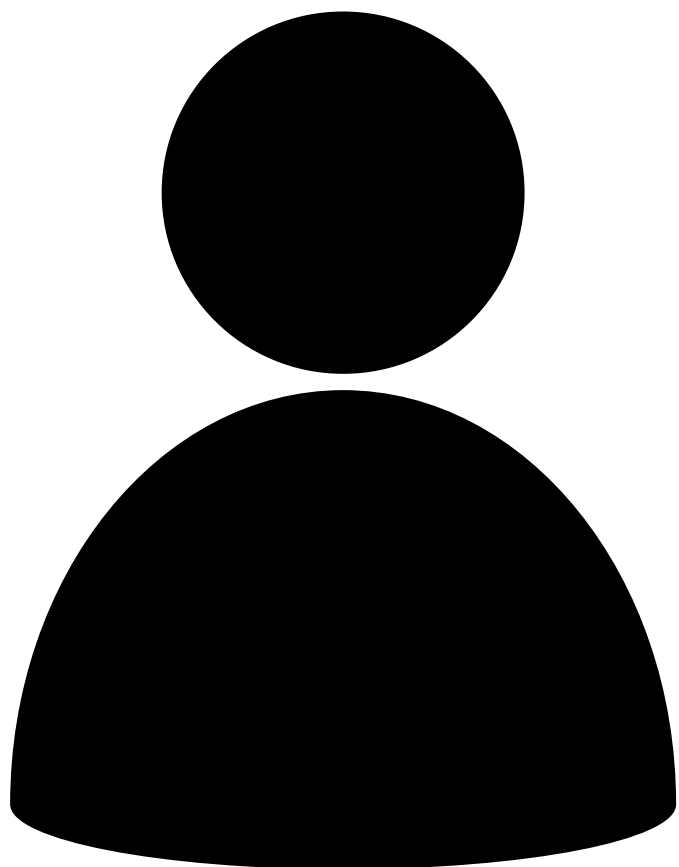
Olivia is a senior in high school, and is doing online school through Iowa Connections Academy and lives in the Cedar Rapids area. This is her first year in IYC. In her high school career, Olivia has participated in band, jazz band, marching band, choir, jazz choir, show band, and diversity, equity, and inclusion committee. Olivia is also a volunteer with the Americans Civil Liberties Union of Iowa. In the past, Olivia has spent several weeks of her summers volunteering at sports camps for those with vision impairments. Olivia is passionate about disability rights, as she is legally blind and a guide dog user. After high school, Olivia wants to go to the University of Iowa to double major in social work and political science to make a difference in the world for those with disabilities.

Liz Renshaw (she/her/hers)



Liz is a sophomore at John F. Kennedy High School in Cedar Rapids. This is her first year in IYC. She is involved in volleyball, diving, and Kinder Kennedy, as well as being on the Honor Roll of Excellence. She enjoys spending time outdoors, hanging out with friends, and baking. She uses her free time to volunteer with several different non profit organizations and enjoys spending time with her loved ones.

Joshua Barker (he/him/his)



Joshua is a junior at Cedar Rapids Kennedy High School in Cedar Rapids. This is his first year in IYC. Joshua is starting his third year in the lighting crew for the school theater program at Kennedy. He is currently in Torch as a writer for the school newspaper. Over the summer, Joshua started volunteering at the Hiawatha Public Library. He is also quite passionate when it comes to learning about politics, society and issues around the world. In the future, Joshua plans on majoring in political science and is currently looking at several colleges in the state of Iowa.



Iowa Youth Congress Member Bios



Siraj Saad (he/him/his)

Siraj is a junior at Kennedy High School in Cedar Rapids. This is his first year in IYC. He is involved with cross country and tennis in school and Leadership for Five Seasons outside of school. Siraj plans on majoring in engineering at University of California.



Iowa Youth Congress Member Bios

Des Moines District



Maia Long (she/her/hers)

Maia is a homeschooled junior from Altoona. This her second year in IYC. She was an intern with PI515 during the summer of 2022. In the internship, she helped run a tech program at Hiatt Middle School. She currently works in production at her local church, mainly as a camera operator, sound tech and director. She is interested in psychology and EMS. She is very passionate about mental health. Her goal is to use the talents and experiences that God has given her to spread hope and love to others.



Saw Gee Dow Sow (he/him/his)

Saw is a Junior at North High School in Des Moines. This is his first year in IYC. He is involved in Student Leadership, an Ambassador for his school, tennis, National Honor Society, golf, Support for Students, and Youth Leadership Initiative. Saw plans on getting a degree in business then going on to law school.



Pleyiwon Forfor (she/her/hers)

Pleyiwon is a first year IYC member and a junior at North High School in Des Monies. She enjoys singing and reading, but most of her free time is spent watching Netflix with her brother. She plays soccer like two of her brothers, but if you ask them, they don't consider what she does soccer since they are so good. Pleyiwon enjoys learning different accents even though she is terrible at it. She loves how Trevor Noah is so good at doing multiple accents, and he's her inspiration for that habit. Pleyiwon plans on attending a four-year college, but she doesn't know what she's going to do yet or what school she would like to go to. She is still open to learning about what college or major might be best for her.



Iowa Youth Congress Member Bios

Bella McDonald (she/her/hers)



Bella is a freshman at Prairieview Junior High in Waukee. This is her first year in IYC. She participates in gymnastics, varsity cheer, show choir, honor choir, silver cord, and mock trial. This past year, Bella was a straight A student, nominated as an all state lawyer in Mock Trial, featured on the Today Show for the Coronavirus and the Classroom town hall, and received the Iowa Governor's Volunteer Award for her work in the 2021-22 Iowa Youth Action Squad. Bella has an intense passion for creating change and helping others in her community. She is undecided on her major, but is interested in studying law and becoming a judge.

Ritika Shroff (she/her/hers)



Ritika is a senior at Waukee High School in Waukee. This is her first year in IYC. She is the Yearbook Editor for her school's Publication and is also involved in Mock Trial, National Honor Society, and Silver Cord. Outside of school, she is the Executive Chair of Community Youth Concepts uVoice Board, participates in Chrysalis GirlPeer Mentorship Program, and a volunteer with EMBARC. With her time in-between, Ritika is working to earn her private pilot's license!

Rebekah Schurz (she/her/hers)



Rebekah is a junior at Carlisle High School in Carlisle. This is her first year in IYC. She is involved in choir, debate, mock trial, silver cord, and environmental club. She loves volunteering in my community, and overall trying to make Iowa a better place for everyone.



Iowa Youth Congress Member Bios



Luca Jenkin (he/him/his)

Luca is a sophomore at Waukee Northwest and lives in Waukee. He was a member of the Youth Action Squad last year. Outside of IYC, he mainly participates in speech and theatre. Currently, he is stage managing for his school's fall play and plans on signing up for National Speech and Debate and Iowa High School Speech. Luca is an indicted thespian in his school's troupe. He is also part of his school's JV show choir, Aurora.



SaraGrace Lamb (she/her/hers)

SaraGrace is a senior at Roosevelt High School in Des Moines. This is her second year in IYC but her first year as a District Officer. Previously, she has taken part in Iowa's COVID-19 Youth Action Squad, along with participating in her school's Mock Trial Team, Theatre, acting as the girl's Cross Country Team Manager, and National Honors Society. She is passionate about child protection, and when she is not at the barn she jumps at or doing school work, she is staying as involved in the juvenile protection system as much as she can. SaraGrace plans on becoming a juvenile defense attorney, while staying active in her community.



Iowa Youth Congress Member Bios

Manchester District



Olivia Marti (she/her/hers)

Olivia is a junior at Waukon High School in Allamakee County. This is her first year in IYC. She is involved in many activities within her community including wrestling, cross country, track and field, Student Council, Speech Contest, Future Farmers of America, Future Business Leaders of America, Bell Choir, band, and much more. She spends a lot of time volunteering at the nursing home and the public library as well as working at the town theater, a local diner and a supper club in a nearby town. She is interested in science, agriculture, and politics. After high school, she plans to attend a four year university and remains currently undecided for her major.



Anurag Anugu (he/him/his)

Anurag is a senior at Cedar Falls High School in Cedar Falls. This is his first year in IYC. He is involved in tennis, volunteering, speech, and Science Olympiad. Outside of school, he is a member of the Youth Advisory Board for the Iowa STEM Advisory Council and a board member of the Club Kids For A Cause charity. Anurag plans on majoring in biology with a pre-med focus at an undecided university.



Jack Baumann (he/his/him)

Jack is a junior at Cedar Falls High School in Cedar Falls. This is his first year in IYC. As an autistic person, he is a proud advocate for disabled youth in Iowa. During his free time, he enjoys cycling, reading, and learning new things. Jack plans on majoring in Hospitality Management at Iowa State University and hopes to work for The Walt Disney Company in the near future.



Rebecca Suhr (she/her/hers)

Rebecca Suhr is a senior at Central Community School and lives in St Olaf. This is her first year in IYC. She is the secretary in her Future Farm program at school and is also in National Honor Society. She enjoys hanging out with friends and family and baking. Her future plans are not final yet but she is interested in the military or going into college.



Iowa Youth Congress Member Bios



Amaiyah Korf (she/her/hers)

Amaiyah is a junior at Cedar Falls High School in Cedar Falls. This is her first year in IYC. She is included in her school Mentors In Violence Prevention program which educates youth in her school on violence in relationships. She is also a part of her school's Tiger Pals program, meeting with children across the district to help them create a fun environment in their school. She loves to spend her time listening to true crime podcasts to help prepare herself for her future in the Criminal Justice System. After graduation Amaiyah plans on majoring in criminal justice at Spellman University.



Maren Denison (she/her/hers)

Maren is a senior at Cedar Falls High School in Cedar Falls. This is her first year in IYC. She is involved in band, marching band, cross country, track and field, and Student Senate. She is also a youth leader at her church. You can find her volunteering on political campaigns, playing guitar, and advocating for healthcare issues. Maren plans on majoring in public policy with an interest in public health and biology at an undecided university.



Cale Wellnitz (he/him/his)

Cale is a senior at Cedar Falls High School in Cedar Falls. This is his first year in IYC. He is involved in golf, rocket club, and youth group. He also works as a janitor and volunteers at a food pantry. Some of his interests include cooking, reading, and biking. Cale plans to major in economics at a university after he graduates this year.



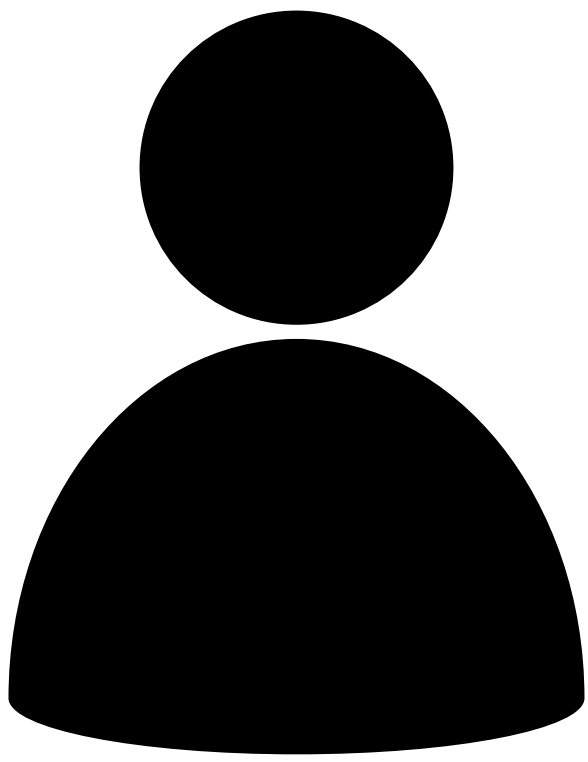
Saanvi Ram (she/her/hers)

Saanvi is a sophomore at Hempstead High School in Dubuque. This is her first year in IYC. She is involved in a couple of youth leadership programs such as YAPPERS and her school's Student Support Foundation. Saanvi participates in her school's debate team and is a member of the Green Team and Key Club. She likes to spend her free time playing the cello and collecting fluffy things. Saanvi is interested in advocacy and hopes to go into a field where she is helping others.



Iowa Youth Congress Member Bios

Eonna Barnes (she/her/hers)



Eonna is a junior at Cedar Falls High School in Cedar Falls. This is her first year in IYC. She is currently involved in the Equity Committee, Black Student Union, and a student ambassador. She will participate in track, the fishing team, and trap shooting this year. In the future, she sees herself going to her dream college, Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University (FAMU) to major in political science and possibly working for a school board or being a congresswoman.



Iowa Youth Congress Member Bios

Osceola District



Pranesh Kalavala (she/her/hers)

Pranesh is a senior at Waukee High School in Waukee. This is his second year in IYC. Pranesh participates in various volunteering activities, Waukee National Honor Society, cross country, swim, and track. He plans to go to college and graduate as a Finance major.



Joe Su (he/him/his)

Joe is a senior at Valley High School in West Des Moines. This is his third year in IYC. He participates in student council, debate, mock trial, DECA, model UN, science bowl, tennis, and orchestra. In his free time, he enjoys reading and playing video games. He is hoping to attend law school in the future.



Joy Su (she/her/hers)

Joy Su is a freshman at Vally High School in West Des Moines. This is her first year in IYC. Joy can often be found performing duties as a lit mag senior editor and soccer referee. At school, they're involved in science bowl, speech and debate, and more. During her free time, you can find them picking up miscellaneous new hobbies and stopping to smell the flowers.



Heiatua Paredes (she/her/hers)

Heiatua is a senior at Lamoni High School in Lamoni. This is her first year in IYC. She is her class president and is involved in band, theater, cheer, track, Future Farmers of America, Exploration Academy, Mayor's Youth Council, Restoring Our County, Communities, and Schools, and National Honor Society. She is also an Iowa High School Speech Association Individual All-State Performer, Borlaug Scholar, and Global Youth Institute attendee. Heiatua plans on attending college and having a career that helps those in need and makes a positive difference in the world.



Iowa Youth Congress Member Bios



Filiz Sonmex (any pronouns)

Filiz is a junior at Waukee High School in Waukee. This her first year in IYC and wants to learn more about the government and how to make a change. She is involved in international club, tennis, speech, Future Business Leaders of America, Robotics, STEM Club and Silver Cord. Filiz will attend an undecided college, to pursue her career in STEM, mostly focusing on science.



Lakshanyaa Rajkumar (she/her/hers)

Lakshanyaa is a junior at Waukee High School and lives in Waukee. This is her first year in IYC. She is the sponsorship director for her school's Future Business Leaders of America club and is involved in National Speech and Debate Association, Model UN, Health Occupations and Students of America (HOSA), Silver Cord, and STEM Club. She started a Girls Who Code club at her school to encourage more girls to pursue careers in computer science. She works as a tutor at MindZone Learning and volunteers as a math and English tutor. She placed in the top ten internationally for supply chain management at the Future Business Leaders Of America, National Leadership Conference 2022. She also placed in the top four nationally for Business Development & Entrepreneurship in the Future Business Leaders Of America, Multi-State Business Battle 2021. She is passionate about science and math and has a strong interest in the medical field. She hopes to attend medical school in the future



Alexandra Bylund (she/her/hers)

Alexandra is a junior at Valley High School in West Des Moines. This is her first year in IYC. She is a member of the National Honor Society, Tri-M, International Thespian Society, and Silver Cord. Alexandra participates in Cross Country, Lacrosse, Jazz Choir, Best Buddies, Iowa High School Speech Association, Chrysalis Girl Power, and has played the piano for ten years. She is the third of four girls. Her family has nine pet goats, three cats, and a mini Goldendoodle named Ginger.



Iowa Youth Congress Member Bios

Anika Yadav (she/her/hers)



Anika is a passionate junior at Waukee High School in Waukee. This is her second year in IYC. She is heavily involved in the Future Business Leaders of America, and serves as the 2022-2023 State President. Anika has been recognized with the FIRST Robotics Youth Mentor award, Community Service Award, and she placed in the top twelve internationally in Future Business Leaders Of America for Public Service Announcement on Public Health. She is passionate about the environment and youth education. In her free time, she likes to write and play the piano. She hopes to continue exploring her interests and get involved in legislation. Anika is optimistic for her second year in IYC and is looking forward to advocating for Iowan youth and their communities.

Lizzy Orey (she/her/hers)



Lizzy is a senior at Indianola High School in Indianola. This is her first year in IYC. Outside of IYC, Lizzy is a drum major in her high school marching band, a first chair flute player in her schools wind ensemble, a member of A Cappella choir, and a member of Side One show choir. She is also a participant in Interact Club, Environmental Awareness Club, Student Council, Silver Cord, Mentors In Violence Protection, National Honor Society (President) and Mayor's Youth Council. Besides her activities, Lizzy loves to create art and music, and also is a major supporter and participant of youth horticulture/floriculture. You can also find her volunteering across her hometown. Once she graduates, Lizzy plans to attend a four year university to double major in pre-med and psychology, with a double minor in French and neuroscience.



Iowa Youth Congress Member Bios

Red Oak District



Hannah Moore (she/her/hers)

Hannah is a sophomore at Lewis Central High School in Council Bluffs. This is her first year in IYC. At school she is involved in mock trial, speech, student council, and 5-star. Outside of school she enjoys working for the Council Bluffs Soccer Club and the YMCA, as well as spending time with her friends, watching movies and going for walks. In a few years, she plans to attend an undecided college and study pre-law.



Chloe Carter (she/her/hers)

Chloe is a junior at Abraham Lincoln High School in Council Bluffs. This is her first year participating in IYC. She is involved in cross country, cheerleading, track, National History Day, student council, speech and Youth Leadership Council Bluffs. She plans on majoring in either Political Science or History at an undecided university.



Monica Osborn (she/her/hers)

Monica is a sophomore at Treynor High School in Oakland. This is her first year being a representative in the IYC. Monica is very passionate about public speaking and has advanced to State and All-State level competitions with her high school's Speech and Debate team. She is also involved in Choir, Jazz Choir, Colorguard, Junior Optimist Octagon International Club, theater, and 4-H. Monica plans on studying Communications and Political Science at an unknown university.



Iowa Youth Congress Member Bios

Sioux City District



Camdyn Meier (he/him/his)

Camdyn is a junior at Bishop Heelan High School in Sioux City. This is his first year in IYC. He is a member of Sioux City's Mayor Youth Commission, in Boy Scouts, and is the Vice Chief of Finance in the Order of the Arrow (OA), which is the National Honor Society of Scouting. He has obtained the Vigil Honor, the highest honor in the OA. He is a member of the Quiz Bowl Team and the president of the Coding Club at his school. Camdyn plans to attend the University of Northern Iowa to major in Finance with a minor in Political Science.



Mackenzie Tott (she/her/hers)

Mackenzie is a sophomore at Bishop Heelan Catholic High School in Sioux City. This is her first year in IYC. She is involved with band, choir, debate, quiz bowl, various different clubs and Mayor's Youth Commission. In college, she plans to major in Physics.



Eyursalem Tsegay (she/her/hers)

Eyursalem is a junior at North High School in Sioux City. This is her second year participating in IYC. At school, she is involved in Mentor in Violence Prevention (MVP), Health Occupations and Students of America (HOSA), was a member of her high school cheer team, and was named top 50 for Sioux City Youth Ambassador program. She is passionate about her community so she volunteers when she can. In the future, Eyursalem plans on majoring in public health at an undecided university.



Iowa Youth Congress Member Bios



Ahriana Torres (she/her/hers)

Ahriana is a senior at Sioux City East High School in Sioux City. This is her second year in IYC. She is a leader in March For Our Lives and plays for her school's tennis team. In her free time, she enjoys going on hikes and reading books. Ahriana hopes to become a geriatric psychiatrist in the future. She plans on studying psychology at an undecided four-year university. She is very passionate about helping others, and whenever possible, Ahriana volunteers at her local Humane Society along with The Gospel Mission.



Nick Mickelson (he/him/his)

Nick is a senior at East High School in Sioux City, and this is his first year in IYC. Nick participates in football, basketball, and tennis. He is also an executive member of the student council and a member of National Honors Society and Spanish Honors Society. Nick plans on going to college to earn his Ph.D. in biochemistry.



Kayla Jabre (she/her/hers)

Kayla is a senior at Bishop Heelan High School in Sioux City. She has enjoyed being in IYC for the past two years and currently serves as IYC's Iowa Collaboration for Youth Development Liaison. Outside of IYC, Kayla is the Mayor of Sioux City's Mayor's Youth Commission, an avid piano and oboe player, and was previously a competitive swimmer. She's still deciding on where she plans to further her education but aims towards studying international relations and affairs/policies. When Kayla has nothing to do, she loves to sit with her cats and eat chocolate or noodles.



Iowa Youth Congress Member Bios



Kayla Vonhaden (she/her/hers)

Kayla is a sophomore at East High School in Sioux City. This is her second year in IYC. She participates in many National Speech and Debate Association activities in school along with student council. Out of school, she is active in Mayors Youth Committee and Diversity Equity Inclusion. Despite her busy schedule, she actively volunteers in her community. In the future, she would love to become a lawyer and get an internship some day.



Lidya Tadesse (she/her/hers)

Lidya is a senior at East High School in Sioux City. This is her second year participating in IYC. Lidya is an executive in her local Mayor's Youth Commission. She also participates in Mentors on Violence Prevention, Environmental Club, the World Food Prize, and numerous other activities. In her free time, she likes to read and bake. Lidya is unsure about her exact future career plans, but she just got back from a trip to Ethiopia and she knows that she wants to do something that allows her to visit often and help as much as she can.



Iowa Youth Congress Member Bios

Washington District



Aleena Wittenburg (she/her/hers)

Aleena is a freshman at Prairie High School in Swisher. Aleena has been in basketball, volleyball, tennis, and softball. She enjoys volunteering at her church and school. She also has been involved in decathlon, speech competitions, and Future Problem Solving. Aleena is very passionate about the environment and the conservation of animals, especially tigers. A future career Aleena would like to explore is work related to helping with the environment, specifically environmental engineering.



Matisse Arnone (he/him/his)

Matisse is currently a senior at City High School in Iowa City. This is his second year in IYC. In addition to IYC, he is involved in band where he is a Drum Major and an All-Stater on French Horn. Matisse is also a member of jazz band, Show Choir, Show choir Combo, Environmental and Gardening club, Student Senate, Interact Club, and is a City High Ambassador. He is the founder and president of the City High Young Democrats Club. In addition to school activities, Matisse serves on the Volunteer Iowa's Youth Committee and regularly volunteers for the Iowa City nonprofit Field to Family, a local thrift store Crowded Closet, and the Johnson County Democratic Party. Matisse also plays piano, trumpet, and french horn, and sings in choir. He is also an amateur baker. Matisse wants to major in Environmental Policy at college hopefully somewhere on the East Coast.



Anna Song (she/her/hers)

Anna is a sophomore at Iowa City West High School in Iowa City. This is her first year in IYC. Some activities she participates in are swimming, student government, journalism, and orchestra. She also enjoys readings, designing, and playing word games.



Iowa Youth Congress Member Bios



Addy Yates (she/her/hers)

Addy is a freshman at Sigourney High School in Sigourney. This is her first year in IYC. She participates in student council, yearbook, band, Future Farmers of America, speech, cross country, track, and softball. Addy is excited to advocate for change and meet new people during IYC.



Ellie Yates (she/her/hers)

Ellie is a freshman at Sigourney High School in Sigourney. This is her first year in IYC. She participates in cross country, track, softball, band, yearbook, student council, speech, and Future Farmers of America. Ellie is also triplet and has a dog named Teddy.



Santi Fajardo (he/him/his)

Santi is a senior at Liberty High School in North Liberty. This is his second year in IYC. He is involved in Show Band, Jazz Band, robotics and National Honor Society at his school. Outside of school, he enjoys spending time with family and friends as well as playing some video games, volunteering at the food pantry or maybe even watching a basketball game (he is a big fan of the LA Clippers). He also has a strong passion for all things relating to politics and the issues affecting our society.



Cassandra Fullenkamp (she/they)

Cassandra is a junior at Fort Madison High School in Fort Madison. This is their first year in IYC. She was a tenor saxophone in the Seiba Honor Band and wishes to have three cats and a wiener dog. She is passionate about botany, supporting those around her, and the environment. Their future career choices include bioengineering or a botanist.



Iowa Youth Congress Member Bios



Veda Fitzpatrick (she/her/hers)

Veda is a junior at Iowa City High School in Iowa City. This is her first year in IYC. She is involved in Mock Trial, University of Iowa Youth Rowing, silver cord, and leadership programs with YMCA Camp Wapsie. You can find her reading, walking her dog, being a barista, or enjoying her vinyl collection. Veda plans on majoring in psychology with an interest in criminology at a university.



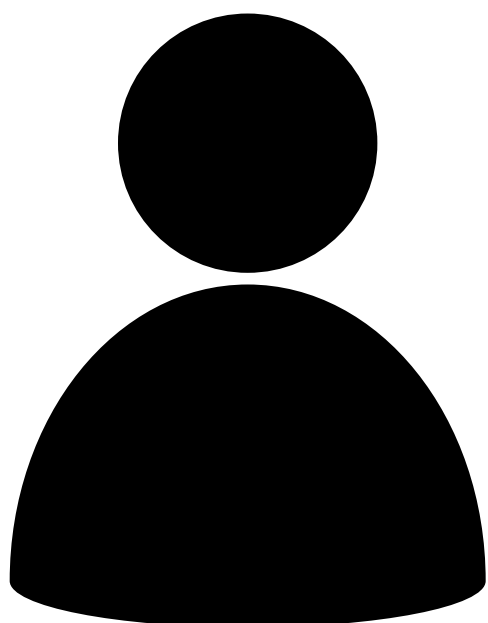
Maya Chu (she/her/hers)

Maya is a senior at Iowa City West High in Iowa City. She is looking forward to her second year in IYC. She is a student journalist, violinist, and participates in Speech and Debate. She loves traveling and listening to podcasts; her favorites include The Ezra Klein Show and Vox Conversations. She will go to college next year and plans to study economics.



Emma Stahlberg (she/her/hers)

Emma is a freshman at Prairie High School in Swisher. She is looking forward to her first year in IYC. She enjoys volunteering at her taekwondo studio and church as well as participating as part of her Academic Decathlon and Robotics Club teams. She loves playing the clarinet, hanging out with her friends and being on the tennis team. She finds medicine fascinating and would be interested in the future in pursuing a career as a trauma surgeon.



Althea Downing-Sherer (she/her/hers)

Althea is a junior at City High School and this is her first year in IYC. Outside of IYC, she does mock trial, ballet, plays violin, and volunteers at the library. She also enjoys creative writing and attended the Iowa Young Writers Studio last summer.



Iowa Youth Congress Member Bios

Waverly District



Adriana Breddin (she/her/hers)

Addy is a junior at Cedar Falls High School in Cedar Falls. This is her first year in IYC. She participates in robotics, Distributive Education Clubs of America, Junior Leadership, Student Senate, Choir, Cheer, Track and more. Some of her favorite things are to sing, hang out with friends, watch Netflix, and spend time with family. She plans on going to college to become a Criminal Defense Lawyer and hopefully a judge one day. Her biggest dream is to be on the Supreme Court.



Samuel Heerts (he/him/his)

Sam is a junior at Dike-New Hartford High School in New Hartford. This is his second year in IYC. In his school, Sam is involved in several extracurriculars, including band, choir, speech, and drama. Outside of school, Sam has qualified for the national level of National History Day once, and was recognized as a finalist for the statewide Know Your Constitution competition twice. In his free time, Sam enjoys playing woodwind instruments, reading, and composing music. After high school, Sam plans to major in music at an undetermined university.



Grace Starr (she/her/hers)

Grace Starr is a junior at AGWSR High School in Steamboat Rock. This is her first year in IYC. She has been involved in Speech, Family, Career, Community Leaders of America and a church youth group. She is interested in writing, history, and politics. After high school, she plans to go to either the University or Northern Iowa or Wartburg College and earn a degree in social work.



Iowa Youth Congress Member Bios



Cannen Vold (he/him/his)

Cannen is a Sophomore at West Fork High School in Greene. This is his second year serving in IYC. Cannen serves as the president of his class, and is also a member of the Principal Selection Committee at his high school. Cannen participates in band, football, basketball, track, baseball, and speech club. Cannen plans to major in Microbiology (Pre-med) at the University of Iowa. Cannen hopes to attend an undecided medical school and specialize in Neurology, after he graduates the University of Iowa.



Ella McGrath (she/her/hers)

Ella is a senior at Ackley-Geneva-Wellsburg-Steamboat Rock High School in Ackley. This is her first year in IYC. She is a member of her school's National Honor Society, the Student Body Leadership Program, and has served as a District Officer for Family, Career, and Community Leaders of America. She also participates in speech, band, girl's basketball and volleyball stats. Outside of school, you can find her working as a barista at her local coffee shop, volunteering as a tutor or at the Ackley Heritage Center. She is passionate about studying plants and plans to major in horticulture and chemistry at an undetermined university.



Kira Strashko (she/her/hers)

Kira is a senior at West Fork High School in Chapin. She has been a part of the IYC for four years. Through school, Kira participates in student council, National Honor Society, Future Farmers of America, Future Business Leaders Of America, and golf. Kira also does competitive figure skating. After high school, Kira plans to get her Bachelor's degree in international relations, then attend law school.

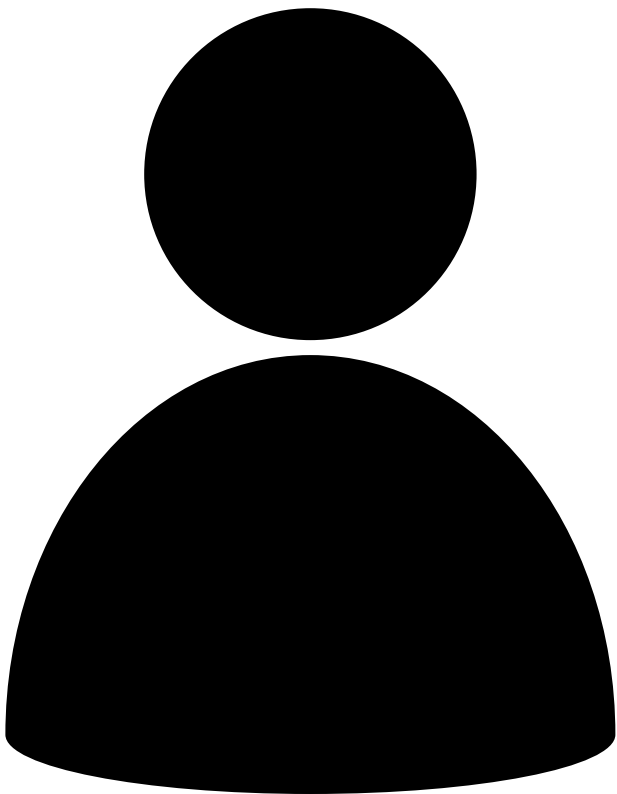


Iowa Youth Congress Member Bios



Jourdyn Riley (she/her/hers)

Jourdyn is a Junior at West High School. This is her first year as a member of IYC. She is involved with dance and volunteering at her local humane society. Jourdyn plans on majoring in psychology with an interest sociology at the University of Houston.



Ari Ellerbroek (she/her/hers)

Ari is a junior at Waverly-Shell Rock Highschool in Waverly in Cedar Falls. This is her first year in IYC. She is involved in cheerleading, tennis, robotics, Speech Team, her library's Teen Advisory Board, GSA, Mathletes, German Club, Musical, and Play. She also is a member of the Citizens Climate Lobby for Iowa. Ari hopes to go to Foreign Exchange next year for her final year of high school. She plans on majoring in Political Science or International Studies at an undecided university.